Prudes on the Prowl, page 1982.

# Modern Life

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# Modern Life

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# ROYAL AND SOCIETY NEWS

*Exclusive to "Modern Life."*

## The Pragger-Wagger and the "Fighting Tenth."

You know what I said about the commission in the Tenth Hussars which the Prince of Wales is to take up shortly. Well, they aren't going to let the Prince's intentions in this matter appear for some weeks, for a very curious reason, which I am not at present at liberty to mention. But the commission is all right, and the "Fighting Tenth" will have the Heir-Apparent amongst its officers within the next three months. As I said a week or two ago, when I exclusively announced this coming appointment, when the Prince gets his new commission he will be in the position of senior to most of the young subalterns who must be sent to the Tenth during the next few years, nearly all the officers who came home with the regiment from South Africa but a few weeks ago being now dead on the Aisne, or wounded and in hospital

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## Not Sufficient that you are a Millionaire or a Peer.

In the interim it is no easy matter to decide who these new subalterns shall be, when for the next twenty years they will be the messmates of the future King Edward VIII. That, you can quite understand, is a serious matter, both for His Royal Highness, and also for his brother "subs." These young bloods have got to be very carefully selected, and it is by no means sufficient that you are the son of a peer, or the heir of a millionaire-brewer.

* * *

## "Georgy Countess," the Sweet Repository of Royal Secrets.

So the vacancies in the "Tenth" are being only slowly and gingerly made up. Viscount Ednam, the Earl of Dudley's eldest son, is, of course, the first, for he is "above reproach," and has been uncommonly well brought up by the best of mothers, and his granny is, and has always been since Edward VII. was Prince of Wales, a prime favourite in the best houses, and more familiar with the Royalties than any unofficial lady in Britain. What "Georgy Countess" doesn't know about Royalty's little secrets isn't worth knowing. Lord Ednam is, too, in the position of being "rich beyond the dreams of avarice"—or his father, Lord Dudley, is, and that counts for a good deal in a regiment which must always be first in the field at polo and over the sticks.

* * *

## The Eton Boy Peer, the Flapper and Her Dorothy Bag.

Another appointment to the Tenth of a like kind is young Lord Chesham, also a millionaire boy-peer, whose father broke his neck three or four years ago when out with the Pytchley, through his horse putting its foot in a blind ditch. Lord Chesham has also been very well reared, and though the Grosvenor peeps out of him sometimes, I don't think he will do the Pragger-Wagger more harm than leading him round to the Empire on Boat Race nights, and letting him put a "pony" on a gee on the Q.T. occasionally, without a word to the bookies.

They already have a good story at Eton about Lord Chesham and a flapper, and what they found in her Dorothy bag when somebody sent it to the police station. But, then, they are such liars at Eton nowadays. Really, you can't believe a word they say!

* * *

## Britain's Year of Mourning.

This is going to be the blackest year in Britain's thousand years of civilisation. As I indicated some weeks ago, there is scarcely a noble or county family which is not in mourning for one or other of its gallant sons. When the House of Lords assembled to listen to Lord Kitchener's speech—the one he didn't make, by the way—nearly all the Peeresses in the gallery were in unrelieved black. Since I enumerated the heirs to coronets who had died in France or Belgium, a dozen more peers have put on black hat-bands and crepe. Lords Dunalley, Sinclair, Tollemache, Trevor, Westmeath, Temple, Sudeley, Waterpark, and half a dozen others, have since then learnt of the deaths of sons, brothers, or near relations, and the lawyers, it need scarcely be said, are reaping a harvest, clearing up the details which the deaths of these gallant lads necessitate.

* * *

## Hills and Trevors.

Amongst these nice boys one of the smartest was young George Trevor, who left Eton for Sandhurst to join his battalion of the Scots Guards not so many months ago. His father is Lord Trevor's brother. The Trevors are really Hills, of the Downshire family. One of our great sports in former days was a Viscount Dungannon. When he died he left all his estates to one of the sons of the third Marquess of Downshire, Lord Arthur Hill, who thereupon assumed the Dungannon surname of Trevor, and was created a Peer in his own right as Lord Trevor.

* * *

## A Romance of the Blue-bloods—and its Wretched End.

The Hill-Trevors are entitled, therefore, to hold their heads high, though they don't have it all their own way nowadays. Lord Trevor, for instance, had bad luck in his matrimonial adventures. Something over sixty, he used to be in the First Life, and he married safely enough in the matter of blood. But the lady (one of the seventeenth Lord Saltoun's daughters) had already been divorced by the fifteenth Lord Zouche of Haryngworth, and Lord Trevor had only been married to her a few months when she died.

* * *

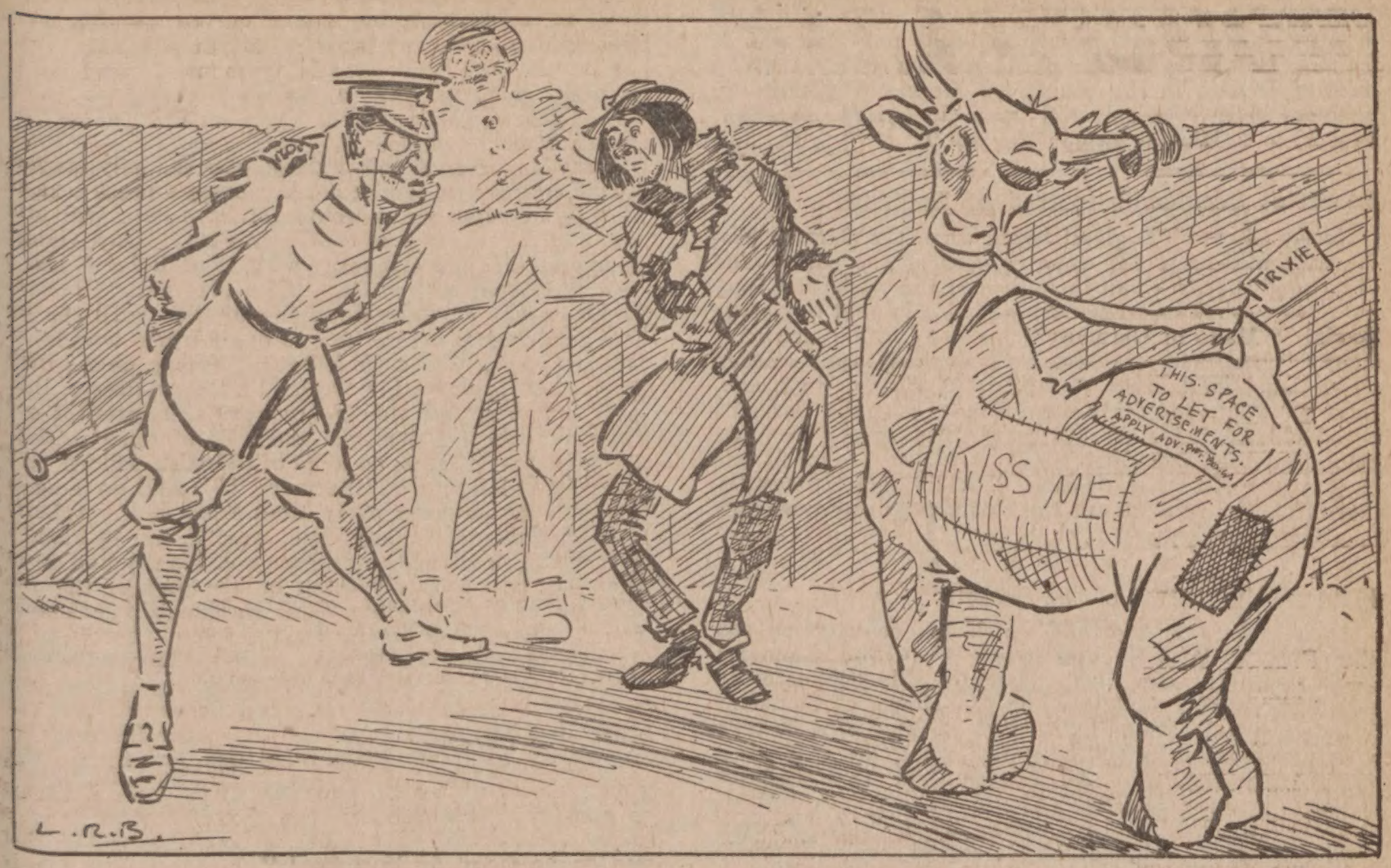
## "Under the Willows of the Aisne."

A couple of years later he married another lady, who had also had some experience of matrimony, she being the widow of the fourth Earl of Bantry, and herself a Petre of Lord Petre's family. Lord Trevor became the father of a daughter, and there his family ended. So the young subaltern of the Scots Guards, who now lies under the willows on the Aisne, was heir to the Trevor barony, he being the only son of Lord Trevor's eldest brother. Lord Trevor is the owner of a fine estate in Denbighshire.

* * *

## Invariably Blessed with Quiver-fulls.

Another youngster who will put a lot of people into mourning (that is, if his reported death is well founded) is Bevil Douglas Tollemache, of the Scots Guards, one of young Lord Tollemache's cousins, and a member of a family noted for its eccentricity and fecundity. All the three Lords Tollemache have gone in for early marriages with rich brides, and they have generally been blessed with "quiver-fulls." Lord Tollemache married General Sir Alfred Kemball's daughter when he was eighteen; the first Lord wedded when he was twenty, and the next Lord at twenty-one. The Tollemaches never marry




**HARD TIMES IN "VARIETY"-LAND.**

**The Brothers Broke offer their services as Regimental Pet to the Blankshires.**

out of their caste. But stay—for now I remember it, there was one instance, that of the late Lord Tollemache's half-brother, Jack. He was a bit of a dare-devil, and easily took umbrage at an unintended slight. Anyway, he got well known "Out West," joined the Nova Scotia Artillery, married a Colonial wench, and, of course, got no satisfaction out of it at all. It ended up in the Divorce Division.

* * *

## More Antediluvian than the Normans.

The late Lord Tollemache was a proud man. It was an immense source of pride to him that he was more antediluvian than the Normans. It was all bunkum about his being of "Saxon descent," but he believed it to his dying day. People hate to be bereft of their pet delusions, so we must be generous to the dear old fellow. It is nicer to recall that he was one of the best landlords in Britain. On Lord Tollemache's Suffolk property, Helmingham Hall—they are all "Halls" in Suffolk—it was the rarest thing in the world for a tenant farmer to shift elsewhere.

When his Lordship had been in possession of the property thirteen years he told me he never knew a tenant to leave him. And although his estate is heavy land, and ten miles from a market, his Lordship said he had never had a farm in hand. There are not many peers who look after their people like the Tollemaches, who have been on their Suffolk property since before books were writ.

* * *

## A Belted Earl and an Asquithean Baron.

Bravo, Lord Rosslyn! Bravo, sir, you are a British gentleman as well as a peer of Parliament! It isn't often a Tory earl writes to the papers in defence of a new Radical noble, but it has been done, and the one case on record is Lord Rosslyn's smart snub to the *Daily Express* the other day anent the latter journal's perpetual execration of Lord Haldane. I am no Radical, and no particular pal of either Rosslyn or Haldane, so I can speak straight from the shoulder. I am disgusted with the *Daily Express* over this business. Lord Haldane, it is true, made the mistake of his life when he persisted, year after year, in filling his public with the charms of German "kultur," and the "peacefulness" of Kaiser Bill. But there is absolutely no evidence whatever that Lord Haldane knew anything to the contrary.

* * *

## If the Eagle Tried to Peck at the Lion!

As one who has lived in Germany, in a German fortress where, at the quietest of the piping times of peace, the atmosphere is electric (Strassburg, the capital of Alsace), I can honestly say I myself never believed that German armaments were intended for Britain, seeing that all sane Germans realised perfectly well what the Eagle would be up against if she tried to peck at the Lion. As it was, it remains a fact that Germany made no war upon Britain. King George made our war because Germany had invaded an inoffensive country whose neutrality we had guaranteed.

* * *

## Germany's Fatal Error.

This Ultimatum from Britain was absolutely necessary if Britain was to retain her name for honour amongst the Powers, and hence we have got to fight until Belgium is avenged. And we *shall* fight—to the last shot in our lockers! But, all the same, I am certain that had the Germans believed that Britain would have entered the struggle over that historic "scrap of paper," Germany would never have fired a shot in Belgium.

* * *

## Germany's Struggle with France and Russia unavoidable.

Germany's ships and armaments were intended for her defence when the day arrived (as everybody who has lived in Germany knew it *would* arrive) when Bernhardi's prophecy of a life-struggle with Russia on one side, and France on the other, had dawned. It is still

quite possible that Lord Haldane was the true prophet. That the Germans hated us I know. But that hate didn't begin with this war. Oh, dear no! Nor did it begin with the Boer War, nor any other war. German hate of Britain is the result of Germany tilting up against British commercial men in every over-sea, Indian, and Colonial city in the world.

* * *

### Secret of Germany's Hatred of England.

German hate of England began when the German people expanded unto the four corners of the earth, and discovered that, with all their science and push and bombast they never secured anything but a market in shoddy goods. "Made in Germany" became the hall-mark for smoky lamps, bad watches, easily-broken keys, scissors which bend, and blunt razors, from London to Tokio, from Stockholm to Table Bay. That's why the Germans hated old England. It has hurt them to the bursting point that the land which produces the men who, in war or play, are always gentlemen, should retain the reputation of always turning out the *real* goods in any market in which they deal.

* * *

### Haldane the "Best o' the Bunch."

And if there is anything which his countrymen can allege against Lord Haldane it is (to be fair and square) that he was the one Radical lawyer-Cabinet-minister in this century who would stop in the House of Commons to listen to a debate on military or naval affairs, or take a serious interest in anything concerning the real needs of our great Empire. All his compeers, from Asquith down, had no personal *kudos* to gain in any debate about the external affairs of the Empire. As for Lloyd George, or Birrell—pooh! How could you expect men with minds which could only really enthuse when the subjects before Parliament were such tin-potting questions as Passive Resistance, Chinese Labour, or "downing the dukes"—how could you expect such people to waste their valuable time in considering the safety of the Empire, or the powers of the nations which might menace us!

* * *

### British Politics the Sport of "Lawyers on the Make."

Lord Haldane, of this kidney, was the only lawyer of Cabinet rank who ever took his country's needs seriously. Had he not done so he would not have been War Minister, and the inventor of the Territorials. Lord Haldane, of course, had no sympathy with Lord Roberts and the *real* statesman of Britain. Of course not. Robert B. Haldane was a "lawyer on the make," with the same fine emoluments before him as every other lawyer—who can get them. The trouble is that so long as the British Parliament is closed to naval and military officers, Indian civil servants, and the proper representatives of every other branch of the official and well-informed section of the public of Britain, so long will British politics be the sport of "lawyers on the make." And so long will England be let down every time there is a world-crisis.

Lord Haldane, in any case, was, in my opinion, the best of the bunch of the statesmen of his day and generation. It is a cowardly thing on the part of the *Daily Express* to keep hurling Lord Haldane's ten-thousand-pound-salary down its readers' throats. Lord Haldane gets no more than did those other clever lawyers, Harding Giffard (now Lord Halsbury, the oldest peer), Bob Cairns, Roundell Palmer (father of Lord Selborne), Bob Reid (now Earl Loreburn), and all the other Chancellors of our time. After all, let us be British, and fix the blame on the right men, not on those who provide us with the best stunt for a shock poster or a catchy headline.

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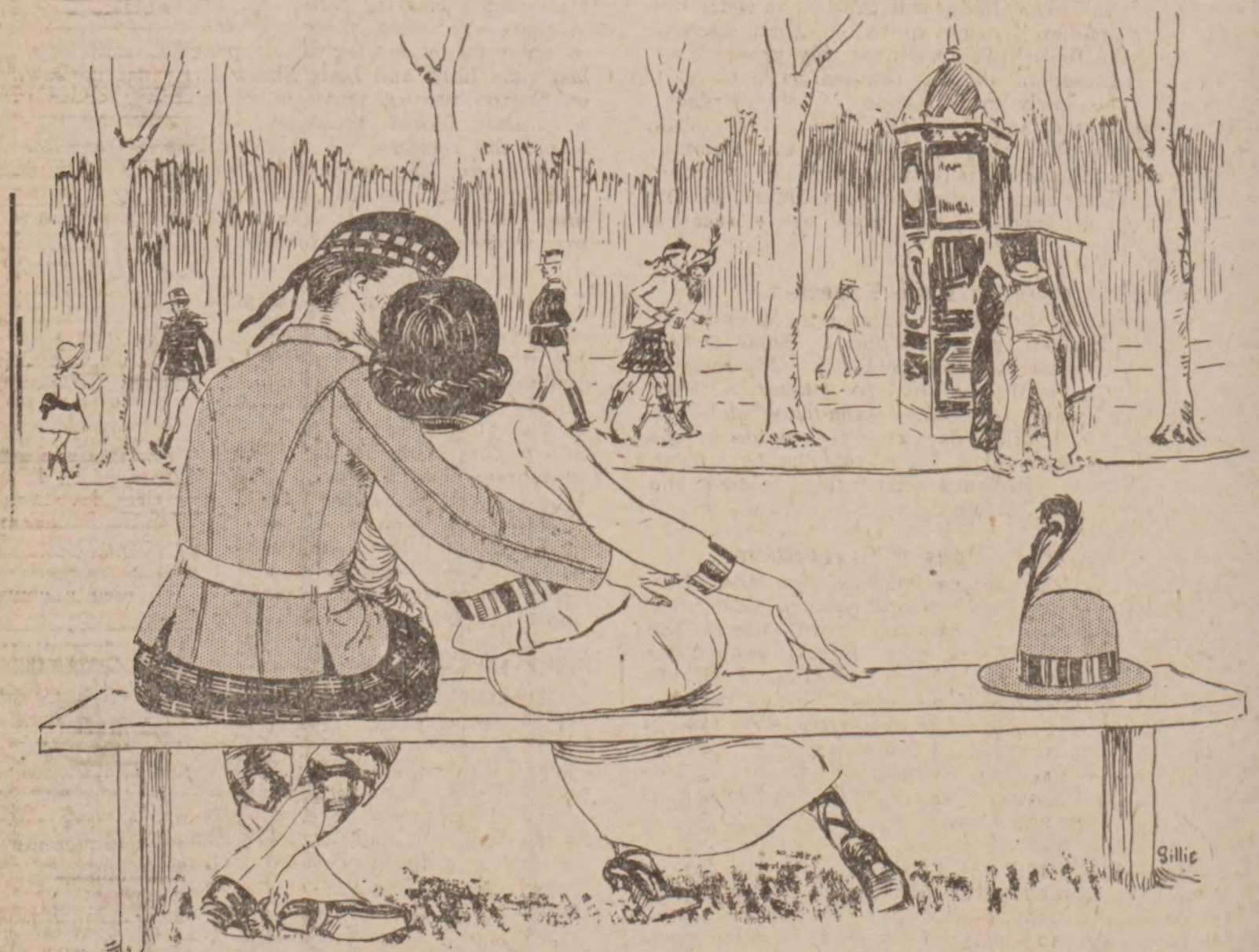
### "I'm As Good As You Are!"

Lord Kitchener is clearing the Canadians off to the South of France, and a "hard case," which has taxed




L'ENTENTE CORDIALE (VERY!).

**Canadian (bitterly to his chum): "And this is the blooming country we've come to save. Is it worth it?"**

the intellect of the War Office, will thus be solved. For our "brither Canadian" is not quite the gentle, amenable soul that the British Tommy invariably proves himself. The born Canadian has just that unfortunate trait which spoilt the early mobilisation of the French. "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality" are all very well as political stunts, but they don't do as war axioms. And the average Canadian is just as fond of turning round on his officer and refusing to obey orders on the score of "I'm as good as you are" as is Jacques Bonhomme.

* * *

### "Just What Might Have Been Expected."

I was reminded of this by a letter from a chum at Woodbridge, in Suffolk, the other day. Some of the maple-leafers are quartered alongside the Monmouths thereabouts, and the Monmouths are "lads." They won't stick any swank from the Canadians, and the trouble ended up the other day with free fights in the streets, and the Monmouths lay about the boys from the far North-West with such gusto that it took the whole village to separate them.

* * *

### Tommy Atkins Very Jealous of Favouritism.

My friend's account of the rumpus with the Monmouths is very diverting, whips being used with awful effect. I don't say one word about the truth of this, but there are other things even more exciting which I *could* say, but affection for both colonials and Tommies keeps me silent. After all, it's a very difficult thing to quarter men from such remote parts of the earth alongside British Tommies, who are jealous of favouritism, and ignorant of "airs," and who strongly object to these traits in other "soldiers," no matter where they come from.

* * *

### The Premier Earl and His Son.

Whether the sudden death of Viscount Ingestre will do anything to re-unite the unhappy Shrewsbury family is doubtful. Lord and Lady Shrewsbury have for years adopted an irreconcilable attitude to each other, and their sordid married career had its climax but a couple of years ago, when their only son had to go into court in order to get his legitimacy publicly established. The last time Lord and Lady Shrewsbury met in Town was on Euston Station platform, when they had to arrange what they should do about their son's coming-of-age. I told the romance of this unpleasant meeting some months ago. Now the young heir to the Premier Earldom of Britain is dead, and his unhappy parents must meet by his bier. It is a sad commentary upon the evanescence of ancient lineage.

* * *

### Two Countesses of Shrewsbury.

Lord Ingestre was a good sport, like his father, and his little six-weeks-old-son will come into his inheritance under happier auspices than most of his forebears, for all the scandal of the Shrewsburys in the last century and the first decade of this will by then be forgotten. His mother is one of Lady Alexandra Paget's charming daughters, and a sister of the Marquess of Anglesey. One of Lord Shrewsbury's sisters is the Marchioness of Londonderry, who is as proud as she is philanthropic, and who was the daughter of that remarkable woman, Theresa Lady Shrewsbury and Talbot who married the then Viscount Ingestre in 1855, and died a couple of years ago.

* * *

### Theresa Lady Shrewsbury and Her Grandchildren.

Anybody who knew the late and present Countesses of Shrewsbury and Talbot will not fail to realise the irony of their respective positions in the Society of their time. Theresa Lady Shrewsbury was one of the figures of her day and generation. There was scarcely a wedding of note from which she was absent. She was a very cultured and charming woman, and she saw many of her grandchildren married, including Lord Castlereagh, the Countess of Ilchester and Viscount Helmsley. At the christenings of her great-grandchildren, Lord Stewart and Lord Stavordale, King Edward stood sponsor.

# LIVELY LITTLE LEADERS

## PRUDES ON THE PROWL.

Manchester has not always been distinguished for broad-mindedness, and from time to time in its history its Watch Committee has made itself the laughing-stock of more cultured parts of England. However, it has come up to the scratch to-day, and has, I am glad to see, given a nasty smack in the eye to those fossilised and frumpery old geese, in the guise of women, who are ever ready to traduce the men who are fighting for them. In other words, the Watch Committee of Manchester, supported by the Town Council in full assembly, has refused to have anything to do with the system of women-patrols that has been in vogue in some of our cities in the neighbourhood of the military camps. The London, Liverpool and Hull people may do as they like regarding the honour of their soldiers and the spying methods of the silly old women of both sexes who are so anxious to turn our soldiers into something worse (if possible) than Sunday-school teachers. The London, Liverpool and Hull old women may do as they like in the matter of acting like prudes on the prowl, and preventing the soldier boys and the soldiers' girls from getting the kisses and the hugs that they themselves, the said old women, would probably like to have a monopoly of. But Manchester will have none of it. Manchester stands for broad-mindedness and common sense. Manchester stands for belief in the honour of her soldiers and in the dishonour of the dishonourable and dirty-minded prudes on the prowl who, never having had anybody to hug their ugly frames, think that every time a soldier kisses his pretty little girl in a lane that is not flooded with electric light he is going down to the depths of perdition itself.

Now, what I want to say is this: Haven't we, in God's name, had enough of these prudes on the prowl? Isn't there some way of getting rid of them and their dirty thinking and their dirty doings? Or are we to confess that we are at our wits' end as regard these pestiferous and pernicious people? We've got societies for doing away with almost everything on God's green earth. Cannot we have a society for doing away with the filthy-minded, muddle-headed, muck-raking monsters who have nothing else to do in these troublous times than libel and traduce the men who are fighting for us? When the history of this war comes to be written, reader, there may be many hidden things torn from their hiding places, many public scandals exposed, many disgraceful happenings brought to the light of day. But I doubt if any more shameful thing has ever been done in the history of war than this institution of women-patrols in some of our great cities, for the purpose of insulting our soldiers, but with the result of degrading the sexless monstrosities who call themselves pure virgins because no man has ever been fool enough to have anything to do with them. For you never see real good women engaged in this task of reviling the soldiers under the pretence of saving their immortal souls. It is only the poor and puny scrag-heaps in the guise of goddesses who must, in order to advertise themselves, put their fingers into every pie, and paddle in every dirty puddle, that stoop at such a time as this to the most disgusting work that can be chosen by frowsy frumps who should be mothers and not judges of men, if they were women at all.

A town councillor at the meeting of the Manchester Council said that there was no intention of insulting the soldiers, but simply an attempt to guard the morals of foolish girls who were apt, at such a time as this, to let their morals run away with them. Was ever such infernal twaddle talked by a town councillor, notwithstanding the fact that probably more twaddle has been talked by town councillors than by any people under the sun? Are the young girls of England in such a hopeless state of morals in the twentieth century that they require to be guarded by women-patrols whenever they get alongside a bunch of men? If they are, then all I can say is that we must be rollicking in hypocrisy to a far greater extent than I thought we were, and I knew that there was a good deal of it about. Are we seriously asked to believe that the mothers of England have so brought up their girls that on the slightest provocation the latter are prepared to sacrifice their honour for a song—for a few bars of "Tipperary," for instance? The idea is monstrous. It libels not only the young men of England, but, far worse, the girls of England. And it is a libel the truth of which I, for one, absolutely refuse to believe.

The females of England would be in a hopelessly immoral condition if we had to believe the statements and trust the work of this wretched thing that is called the Women's Union. For this is the gang of ignorant old geese who are engaged in the nefarious work to which I am referring—the work of women-patrols. And they are a gang that are never content. First they instituted, or, at any rate, were partly responsible for, the monstrous interference with our soldiers' wives, to which I referred a week or two ago. Then they are the gang that made insidious attempts to cut off "Tommy's" rum in the trenches, where he is fighting knee-deep in mud and slush to protect the honour of the very women who are engaged in traducing him. They are a gang of grizzlers that would be in their proper place at the bottom of the sea, far from any possibility of their interfering with the noble women and the noble men who are engaged in the task of pulling England through one of the biggest jobs she has ever tackled.

Really, if this thing were not too monstrous to get funny about, it might almost make a first-class foundation for a pantomime. I learn from one of the speeches at the meeting of the Manchester Town Council referred to, that these women-patrols have a book of rules, and that one of the rules is that the patrols must be provided with electric torches for going down dark lanes. Wouldn't that kill you? Wouldn't that jar you? Wouldn't that split your sides if you saw it at good old Drury Lane? Yet there it is, all laid down in black and white in these ineffably silly and stupid rules. Why shouldn't the soldiers and their best girls go down dark lanes? It seems to me an excellent place for soldiers to go if they wish to whisper sweet nothings in their beloveds' ears. And to put a gross interpretation upon it, as these wretched women-patrols do, is simply a tribute to their own miserable nastiness and a dishonour to their own womanhood. And, in any case, as a very sensible councillor said at the Manchester meeting, it takes all the time of even an experienced policeman to tell whether people are doing right or wrong in a dark lane, and to put a lot of amateurs with torchlights strolling and spying through the dark lanes of Manchester is not only an insult to the whole of the city, but preposterous in the extreme. Even the common sense of a monkey would be able to discern the fact that if once a girl were reported for quite harmlessly being kissed by a soldier in one of these dark lanes, her reputation would be gone for ever, though she might all the time be as pure and holy as even the fossilised old virgins who constitute these shameless women-patrols.

No, reader, all this sort of thing is nonsense, and damned nonsense at that. It is un-English. It is unnecessary. It simply encourages immorality instead of stopping it. Leave the boys and girls alone. They are soldiers, and they have a sense of honour. They are soldiers' sweethearts, and they have a sense of the true and noble womanhood that is typical of the vast majority of English girls. Leave them alone. They are all right. And as for the women-patrols—well, only an American expression is adequate to describe their due. They should be drawn through hell and beaten like cats.

JONATHAN GRUB STRETE.

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To be born a gentleman is an accident; to die one an achievement.

* * *

Don't marry a woman for style; styles are always going out.

* * *

A teetotaller is an intemperate man who wants to remould human nature upon a plan of his own.

# WHO, WHY, WHEN AND WHERE.

## LITTLE QUESTIONS FOR PROMINENT PEOPLE.

What the pious Braganzas, including King Manoel and his Hohenzollern Queen, think about the Pope's comments on Cardinal Mercier and Germany?

* * *

Whether Sir E. Grey's reply to the American manifesto was not the politest letter on record?

* * *

Whether the new Marchioness of Tavistock has yet been received at Woburn Sands? And whether the Marquess is still working laboriously at the White City?

* * *

What General Count Gleichen told the King on Sunday about the doing of the German Crown Prince in France?

* * *

Whether it would not be "the right thing" to confer upon Count Gleichen a British peerage, and thus enable him to get rid of his German title, seeing that he is one of the bravest officers of the British Army, and is a true Briton, born and bred, apart from being his Majesty's cousin?

* * *

Whether Lady Marjorie Feilding "made it up" with her new fiancé on the battlefield in Belgium, or during one of her flights in the air. And whether the lady consulted her father, Lord Denbigh, about it first?

* * *

If it is true that the German reserves of ammunition will be exhausted by the month of June?

* *

Will the unfortunate "Charlie" Masterman *ever* find a seat?

* * *

If there is any precedent in this country for a leading lady leaving the theatre she is starring at on a question of high politics, and whether, on Miss Ferne Rogers's severance from the Drury Lane panto, she did not feel a pang of regret or "shame"?

* * *

If Mr. Lloyd George ought not to feel pleased at the compliments showered on him by former Chancellors of the Exchequer?

* * *

When the Huns bombarded our East Coast ports, why was our wireless station in a residential town, and why in any case was it placed on the coast?

* * *

If it is well authenticated that Cardinal Mercier had communicated with the Sovereign Pontiff, with King Albert, and with King George, before taking the step that led to his "arrest," and if it wasn't a lucky coincidence that the arrest synchronised with the arrival of the British Mission at the Vatican?

**INDEPENDENCE.**
**(Sketched in Piccadilly.)**

If all good sportsmen are not well pleased to know that, after their severe wounds, Reggie Spooner will be able to play cricket again, and Bob Loraine will be able to act again?

* * *

Whether the inscription on Italian sundials, "It is later than you think," might not yet be taken to heart by a Government that seems to be still waiting to see which way the Continental cat will jump?

* * *

What is likely to happen to that New York editor who has been asking lady school teachers "not to scandalise their pupils by the impropriety of their dress"?

* * *

Is it true that Mr. Hall Caine and Mr. Henry Arthur Jones were bitterly "desolated" by the non-appearance of their names in the New Year's Honours List? And what price another Arthur — yclept Pearson?

* * *

The exact expression employed by "George Nathaniel Curzon" on reading the egregious Hauptmann's forecast of a Viceroy-governed England after the Austro-German victory, "with Lord Curzon as possibly the first Governor-General"?

* * *

If it is true that theatrical business is so much better in the country than in the metropolis?

* * *

If a special constable in London was "apprehended" by a uniformed officer for smashing up a public-house with his truncheon? If the case came up before the "special's" own brother, who happens to be a metropolitan police magistrate? And why it was unreported?

* * *

If it is really true that Sir John French has predicted that the war will be over by Easter? And if we should not all like to believe it?

* *

Why the Tory newspapers insist so much upon the "self-effacing" patriotism of their leaders in not making things hot for the Government?

* * *

And if "self-effacing patriotism" isn't a synonym for "common prudence," seeing that the party would be "dead or damned" if it took any other line?

* * *

What exactly does the Blue Cross Fund mean by advertising "all horses cared for; nationality not considered?"

* * *

What Miss Gladys Cooper will do with that £1,200, when she gets it?

# JIMMY PROTESTS.

When I was home on furlough I naturally went to see Amy.

"Jimmy!" she said, when, in my excitement, I had wiped my feet on the lace curtains and placed my cap in the coal-scuttle; "it's you!"

I prodded my vest to make sure.

"I admit it," I said at last, and hummed the air of a popular song which promises great things to those who come back again; but there was nothing doing.

"What's that on your face?" she asked, indignantly; and my brow was sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought as I gingerly explored with a diffident hand.

"Do you mean my moustache?" I said eagerly, when I found it.

"We-ll—yes. What's it for?"

"To give me a milingtary appearance, my dear."

"Then it's failed. But I do think, Jimmy, it's rather mean of you to go and alter your face without my permission."

"My dear girl! It's my own face."

"Maybe; but I have at least a proprietary interest in it, too."

"And don't you like it?"

"It's not pushing enough; unless it pushes backwards. I hate moustaches of a retiring disposition."

To me, that seemed asking for it.

"Well, anyway," Amy continued, "though it tastes rather nicely, I think we'd better have some expert opinion as to whether it comes off or stays on. I don't want you to be mistaken for a German in a crush. I'll wire to Aunt Mabel."

"Good heavens, this is monstrous!" I cried. "I'm not marrying Aunt Mabel, and *she's* got nothing to do with my face. Can't a poor fellow allow Nature to adorn him as she wishes?"

"If that's Nature's idea of adorning," said Amy quietly, "she ought to be ashamed of herself. . . . How long would it take you to shave it off?"

"This is some moustache," said I, "and isn't coming off."

"Every man has his price," stated Amy sadly. "I'll tell you what, Jimmy. Some of my friends have taken a very kindly interest in you since they heard you've taken the King's shilling, signed the pledge, or whatever the expression is, and have given me parcels containing tokens of their esteem. Vide press. In addition, I've prepared with my own hands—now, isn't it worth it? And wouldn't you like to look like a man again?"

Cupidity was ever a vice of mine. "I give in," I said weakly. "Hand me the knife."

And it came that soon there was no hair on my upper lip. I dried my eyes, and Amy led me to inspect the price of my sacrifice.

"I don't know what's in the parcels," said she, "but I'll keep mine till the last."

"By Jove!" I muttered avariciously, "this is a big 'un. Feels like a purse of sovereigns."

The string was slit, the parcel opened. Two pairs of fine thick socks. I expressed my approval and thanks, and turned to the next offering. Two pairs of socks.

"Your friends are strikingly unanimous," I remarked mildly. "However, this one's too big to contain socks . . . . Gee whiz! it's a box."

I opened it, discovering—*four* pairs of beastly-looking socks.

"Good God!" I cried bitterly, "do they think I'm a centipede?" and something snapped in my brain. It stopped snapping, however, when I saw Amy sneaking the remaining parcel—her own. "Let's have it," I said, stretching out my hand.

There was a strange look on her face. "Well, Jimmy, perhaps—you see, I don't want you to burst a blood-vessel—"

"Out with it," I said fiercely, a dim foreboding gripping my soul, or whatever part of my anatomy it is the privilege of a foreboding to grip . . . . More socks. There they lay—dark blue, with a hideous red border; insult to injury.

"Heavens!" I moaned, "I have bartered my moustache for a mess of pottage."

"Never mind, Jimmy," said Amy softly, stroking my bent head, and putting her cheek close to mine, "I'll give you something else instead. . . ."

Which wasn't so bad, was it?

ERIC DE BANZIE.

# TABLOID TOPICS.

Sir Henry Howard has gone to Rome to tell the Pope Vatican about the origin of the war.

* * *

Although the carving-up process has not yet begun, a good deal of the stuffing has been knocked out of Turkey already.

* * *

"England the Damned," says the *North German Gazette*. "England the Undammed," say the residents of the Thames Valley.

* * *

The German newspapers make much of the fact that the Kaiser is eating War Bread. And we fancy he has bitten off more than he can chew.

* * *

Seeing how much-married the Turks are, the Government must have to pay a lot of separation allowances to the numerous wives of each soldier.

* * *

A "Bill-posting Gun" is one of the inventions patented last year. Judging by the bills that have been posted to us lately, it must be a Maxim.

* * *

"Thousands and thousands of articles are manufactured in Germany at a cheaper rate than England can manufacture them," says a German writer in an American paper. Newspaper articles, for example.

* * *

"German authorities' shifts to get raw material," says a headline. But doesn't a shift usually get raw material—or thereabouts?

Mr. Thomas Maclean asks:—"What will follow upon Germany's dream of invasion?" Easy! A grim awakening.

* * *

Inveighing against "Slackers," Mr. Macnamara said: "It was no use to mince matters." But he seemed to be completely cut up about it.

* * *

The Clown Prince's contribution to a symposium in the Berlin *Lokal Anzeiger* on "How to spend Christmas," reads:—"Keep cool and stick to it." He must be referring to his loot from that French castle.

* * *

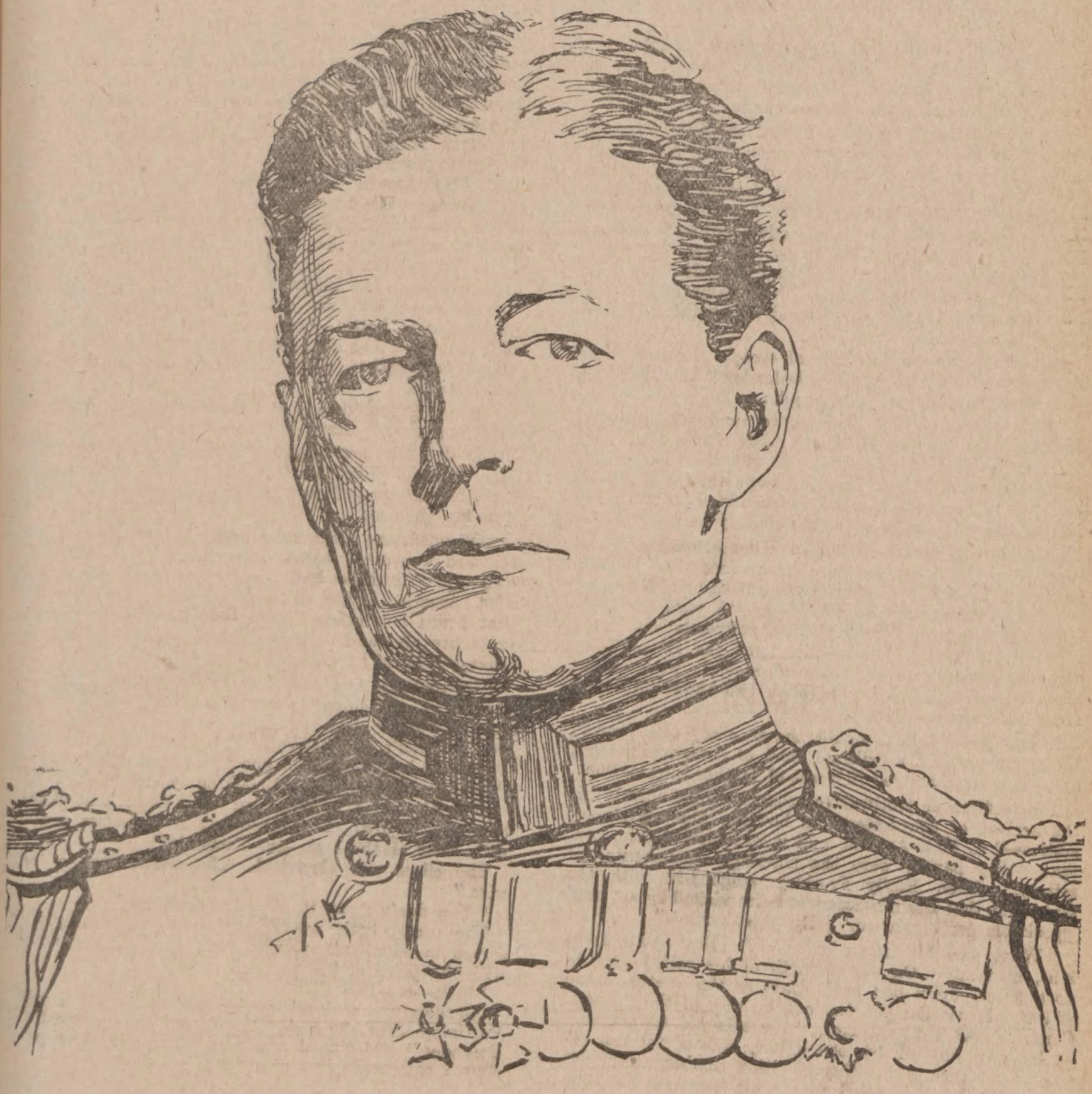
The Nobel Committee has decided that the Peace Prize shall not be distributed this year. It is a wise decision, for the person entrusted with its delivery would have been obliged to approach the winner under a white flag.

* * *

"Four regiments of the Defence Force . . . . . were landed in Luidertzlucht in September and October . . . . To return to Luderitzbucht" (*Daily News*). Well, in the interests of strict accuracy, perhaps it would be advisable.

* * *

The Central News cables from New York, in reference to the American Note to our Government, that "War policies are regarded as a huge joke." We trust that, at the same time, a Peace Policy may be looked upon in grim earnest.



"MODERN LIFE'S" GALLERY OF WAR CELEBRITIES.

No. 5.—Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty, Commanding the First Battle-Cruiser Squadron.

# SOMETHING IN A NAME.

Mrs. Amorie, of Acacia Cottage, had decided to change her name. As a consequence the tongues of Downbridge went a-wagging and the heads of Downbridge went a-nodding.

"Oh, it be right enough," quoth Mrs. Sanders to her neighbour, Miss Robinson. "I had it from Em'ly Freckley, who's in service at the Cottage. 'Em'ly,' says her mistress only yesterday, 'you won't be Mrs. Amorie's maid much longer. I'm going to change my name.'"

What could be plainer, Mrs. Sanders thought, except it was the face of Miss Robinson, who, it may be mentioned, was a tactless spinster of uncertain age, and was reckless in calling a spade a spade.

Neither had anything to say against Mrs. Amorie's freedom to make a second excursion into Matrimony Land. It was known that her late husband was a scamp who sprinted through his fortune, and then considerately broke his neck in the hunting field, leaving his widow with her own modest annuity and an attractive personality. Yet why this secrecy? She had always been stuck up and kep' herself to herself. There, however, was the fact. Mrs. Amorie had decided to change her name. Beyond that point no finger-post was visible.

As if to leave no loophole of escape from credence in the news, the "Downbridge Defender" that morning published the following paragraph:—

"It is our duty and pleasure to announce, on what we believe to be good authority, that a charming lady resident in our midst is shortly to re-enter the married state. In expressing a heartfelt hope that a felicitous future is in store for her, we feel confident that we are voicing the sentiments of the community as a whole."

There it was in big-leaded type beneath an editorial supporting the movement to erect an incandescent lamp in the centre of the market-place, an editorial denouncing the opponents of the scheme as "a pack of pusillanimous sluggards," as "pitiable poltroons who poked about in the dark," and—this "put the lid on"—as "turnip-headed traitors." Downbridge, it went on, as a market-town containing nigh on two thousand souls, must maintain its dignity.

It was impossible to doubt the accuracy of a journal which put up such a brilliant show of rhetorical flowers, and the gossips started in quest of further information.

The postmaster testified (of course, confidentially) to the arrival of two letters, in howling blue envelopes, addressed to Mrs. Amorie, and it was carried nem. con. that "they papers were the marriage settlements an' settery." Then Em'ly Freckley weighed-in with the statement that her mistress was twice visited by a "mos' 'speckable gen'l'man, an' jolly good-lookin'."

"What was his name, my girl?" asked John Tomkins, excitedly. On the strength of his salary as sub-postmaster, John had paid court to the pretty young widow, his passion pouring out by way of the "Poets' Corner." As a versemaker, "our talented townsman," as he was dubbed by the editor, was a failure. It was an instance of vaulting ambition coming a cropper. But then he had omitted to try his 'prentice hand on patriotic poetry.

Emily Freckley gave answer.

"'Take in my kyard, miss,' he says quite perlite. "An' I read it," added the girl, unashamed and unabashed. "It was 'Mr. Gregory Garnishee.'"

The gossips dissolved as wise as ever and as determined to get to the bottom of things.

They egged on Miss Brown (who displayed in her High Street window a card bearing the legends "Modes et Robes—Ici on Parle Francais") to the venturesome action of waiting upon Mrs. Amorie and soliciting, in the purest Clapham French, the honour of supplying the bridal costume and trousseau. On her return she reported that her application was received with astonishment, not to say amusement, and apparently resenting this reception as reflecting on her capacity to complete such an order to satisfaction, Miss Brown described the lady as "gorch," lacking in "beangseeongee," and quite "hooter," you know.

Mr. Nagg's proffer to do the kerridge and greys with two men in livery slap-up, nobby harness and everything A1, at a figger which would leave him only the 'onour of the thing, fared no better.

Downbridge remained in seething ignorance.

Meanwhile, Mr. Richard Truman, who had established himself as a general practitioner in Downbridge with more physical profit to his patients than pecuniary profit to himself, was a prey to melancholy. He had been called to Acacia Cottage to thrash out a considerable crop of mumps which Emily had harvested in her capacious throat, and had fallen in love with her fascinating mistress. He had frequently looked in upon Mrs. Amorie, and had thought her eyes sparkled in welcome. His hopes were shattered. And who the deuce was Gregory Garnishee when he was at home? That a certain medico had run off the line a bit he knew, for as near as a toucher he had sent cod-liver oil and quinine to the plethoric rector and a strong purgative to poor, anæmic, skinny Miss Robinson. He glanced at a bottle containing cyanide of potassium, shot out a "Bah!" opened his tobacco-pouch, and sought consolation in My Lady Nicotine and a walk in the meadow.

"Why, Dr. Truman, wherever have you been this very long time? Have I offended you?"

The doctor's now bright English face was turned to Mrs. Amorie. The four-feet width of water ranking as the River Down had no further charms for him. Here was his goddess.

"Offended, my dear madame! It is not possible." Richard was proof against ridicule or pity. He would own up. "I have been mad enough to adore you, Mrs. Amorie, and, still more insanely, have imagined that I was not indifferent to you. But I will bear my cross bravely, and wish the future Mrs. Garnishee the biggest heap of happiness."

"Garnishee! Oh, how splendidly lovely! And you suppose I am going to marry a man who, I believe, already owns a wife and three replicas of himself. Besides, I don't like lawyers, notwithstanding that Mr. Garnishee brought me the good news that Uncle Zebedee Pottletop had left me £10,000 on condition that I assumed his name. What an ugly name, but what a handsome figure! You could buy a first-class practice with some of that—eh—er—Richard?"

The effect was electrical. The doctor was a "live wire."

"You don't mean it, Angela, darling?"

The pretty little woman pretended to be deeply absorbed in botanical pursuits, and uprooted a dandelion with the point of her parasol.

"I do—er—Dick!"

As there was no legal barrier against Angela dropping Pottletop after she had taken it up, the "Downbridge Defender" had tipped a winner after all. The parish church campanologists also rang the changes.

* * * * *

No, there is no famous physician called Sir Richard Truman. Nothing of the penny novelette about this story.

HAL VICKE.

## EDITOR'S NOTE.

**The Editor will be pleased to consider short stories, 750 to 2,000 words, and humorous topical "skits" not exceeding 1,000 words. Payment at usual rates.**

# OUGE AND RUFFLES.

## Wife Hobby.

vas very ungallant, surely, of Mr. Hammerstein, of n Opera House fame, to ask those ubiquitous re- s, who had scented out his second marriage the day, "Do you think I'd be smiling if I was ed?" Considering it was his wedding day, I think it was quite likely he would be. It is only ay after the ceremony a bridegroom acquires the ndly look of utter boredom and general "fed- s" with life. But perhaps Mr. Hammerstein, g been married before, was anticipating. That's vorst of these much-married men, they know the at once; and yet they keep on marrying. One ers why. I suppose, like every other habit, good, nd indifferent, once you get into the way of marry- 's difficult to get out of it. A perfectly charming of my acquaintance, who seemed to have a new wife time I met him, told me once that the great charm oid matrimony lay in its fleetingness. "You know ll it won't last," he declared; "that, well"—he ed happily—"you've jolly well got to make the of it while it does." I expect the lawyers will miss when he dies. It takes a rich man to make a hobby atrimony. All hobbies are expensive, of course, collecting stamps to wives, but I should put the e hobby" first on the list. A woman—past, pre- or future—is always expensive. As an Arab ario told me once, with a flash of white teeth and xpressive shrug, "You've got to pay to get rid of vife; you've got to pay to buy another; and you've o save up for the next."

A fair recruiter on the look-out for likely young men.

## Tangos and Trenches.

Somebody told me the other day that there was a lot of dancing going on in spite of the war. "You don't read of it in the papers," he said significantly, "but it's there all the same." Officers, it seems, home on a day or two's leave from the front, ask nothing better than to foot it merrily to the tune of a pretty girl, a band and the passing hour. From the trenches to the Tango seems a far cry, but it does one good to think of brave men dancing a gay defiance to death. I hope, however, that no young man who has not joined the Army has the audacity to waltz among his peers. It is all very well for our soldiers to seek a little relaxation from the mud and the outposts of Eternity, but any mere civilian who dares to dance while England burns should be . . . .(censored.—Ed.)

## The Fallen Star.

The Kaiser, it seems, is breaking out in a new place. The dour would-be conqueror of the world is offering roses now instead of bullets to the ladies. Also, not content with showering daily bouquets upon an unwilling Duchess, he has had himself photographed with a pretty village girl, and in exchange has given her a scrap of paper, safeguarding her village from unwelcome attentions at the hands of the Huns. Well, all this seems very festive and harmless, and if the Kaiserin doesn't object, nobody else can say a word; but what about all those other women to whom the Kaiser's satellites have meted out other flowers from the bouquet of war, the roses of outrage, the lilies of shame, the forget-me-nots of wantonness? I don't think there is a woman living who, in future, could accept a gift from the Prussian militarists without looking for the blood upon it. A woman, up to now, has always been too high for even wars to touch. She has glimmered like a star in the sky of civilization, a beacon by night, a hidden fire by day. It has remained for the Germans to reach up and pull her down and roll her in the mud. And yet the Kaiser, greatly daring, still offers roses. I say, greatly daring, because who knows he may one day meet a Jael, who, remembering her sister, may not wait for the night to offer him a dagger's kiss in exchange for his rose.

## The A. and O.

The leading lady in the new play at the St. James's has been somewhat ungallantly described as playing a part which makes of her "a rose in June, a witch, an angel, a fairy, a demon." The critic winds up by saying, "A very womanly part, surely." As if there was a man living who knew anything at all about a woman. A man's knowledge of women consists in what she tells him about herself—or other women. And as a revealer of herself, every woman knows that fiction is better than truth. In cold blood we are—what we are—neither rose nor demon—nothing so poetical or scarlet, but the Alpha and Omega of you, dear Mr. Man, for all that. As somebody neatly put it to me the other day, a woman makes for the addition of mankind, the multiplication of troubles, the subtraction of the purse, and the division of hearts.

Lorna Hamilton.

# PRESIDENT WILSON OUT OF HIS DEPTH.

President Wilson, whose little note has been giving Sir E. Grey quite a lot of trouble, has all the aptitude of the American business man, but none of the aristocratic slimness of English politicians. He is a thin, rather insignificant-looking little man. He, of course, succeeded the bulky Mr. Taft, and found the Presidential chair of the latter no end of a nuisance. Taft's chair would have comfortably seated three Wilsons, and the one and only found himself quite out of his depth—lost in fact in the amazing dimensions of the chair. It put him off his work, and serious consultations were held to decide what should be done. Some suggested a chair within a chair—a piece of furniture with a false bottom, so to speak. Eventually, after much worrying and a long hunt, Roosevelt's chair was run to earth, and to-day, as he signs his State documents, Wilson declares that it fits him to a tee.

# BY THE WAY

A friend of mine, whose eyesight—such as it is, and what there is of it—debars him from active service in the ranks, expresses surprise that his fairly wide attainments as a linguist have not so far won him the interpretership for which he has several times applied. He can speak fluent German, French, Dutch and Flemish. As there must be many other men in a like situation—some of them, no doubt, readers of MODERN LIFE—I beg leave to tell them a little story—a true one:—A, a public school and 'varsity man, has spoken and written French as well as he has English ever since boyhood. He was for some years, too, at a German school. He went up for examination, as an interpreter, with one of the Naval Brigades, and a cockney, who was hardly intelligible in French, passed him (in French) with the remark: "French: fair." When it came to German, the examiner said he (the examiner) was not very good at German himself, but, etc., etc. . . So A said: "All right, old chap. I was educated in Germany, so can probably give you points." The examiner smiled and passed him "good" in German.

* * *

This capital example of how not to do it is by no means unique. Rather is it typical. The result is that the French Government, acting on the urgent representation of their Commander-in-Chief, who in turn has acted on exasperated complaints from his generals, have put their hoofs down with some force. So many men were being sent out as skilled interpreters who positively could not find their way in the country, my friend, that the French authorities have now declined to take any interpreters at all from England. For this entirely reasonable and understandable snub we have only our own genius for muddling to thank. The obvious conclusion I come to with regard to my friend's application for an interpretership—and *his* case is probably on all fours with that of many another really accomplished linguist—is that, unless he can pull a very big string, he will never get to the front. A near relative of mine, who was for many years in our Consular Service, is actually in Belgium as an interpreter, and his intimate colloquial knowledge of tongues surprises the French and Belgian officers. Said a French colonel to him at Dunkirk: "Comment! vous êtes interprête anglais, et vous savez parler français!" And the speaker did not mean to be a bit sarcastic, either.

* * *

Before leaving the subject of interpreters altogether, I cannot help remarking on the amazing ineptitude of our authorities in the matter of the personal, apart from linguistic, qualifications of officers already appointed. In time of war the Government of a country becomes automatically a Committee of Public Safety, yet, if we may judge from their acts to date, Public Safety is the one thing in the world the Government has *not* in view. The interpreter attached to a Royal Engineer Brigade on the Kent Coast has a German name, and was only naturalized last June. And his brother—under another name, an English one, too—is in the ranks of the same corps. As, on service, it would be the interpreter who would be told off to secure guides, his opportunities for treachery would be unlimited. This sort of lunacy is, to my simple mind, criminal. We know what happened to the Royal Naval Division now eating its heart out in Holland. That was "guides'" work.

* * *

I was most grievously sorry to learn of the death of Harry Lane Wilson, a graceful composer, artistic singer and prime of good fellows. There was something Homeric about his energies; for, when he had written a good ballad he popularized it himself on concert platforms. How many baritones of the day could write a song worth singing, and how many composers could sing a note worth listening to? Lane Wilson, for some reason best known to himself, signed his songs "Robert Batten"—or generally did so. And for many years this dual identity was unknown even to his nearest friends. He once gave a bachelor supper at Frascati's, and took us all in by professing vast indignation at "that chap Batten's" not turning up. "He never keeps an appointment," he assured us. Half way through supper, the vacant chair was removed. "Carmena" had the real swing, and Lane Wilson made a pot of money out of it.

I have called his capacity for writing and singing songs "Homeric." One wonders what Homer would have made if he had been able to sell the singing rights of the "Odyssey" and "Iliad."

* * *

Those young men who have enlisted for the duration of the war, or taken temporary commissions in Kitchener's Army, will have a rude awakening if they have been counting on a sudden and jubilant return to civil life the day after peace has been formally signed at Berlin. For it does not, and will not, rest with them to say when the war is over. The Secretary of State for War and his Synod have very emphatic and definite ideas on that subject. The war will only be over—so far as the releasing of Kitchener's Army from service is concerned—when there ceases to be any need for an army of occupation in Germany. The South African War was a picnic compared with our present job; and yet the signing

First Tragedian: "I don't think much of the brand, old man."
Second Tragedian: "You can't possibly get better, laddie."
**First Tragedian: "Oh, I'm *hoping* against fatal results."**

of peace at Pretoria was only the beginning of things for many regiments of Yeomanry. With all the traditions of discipline to which Germans are bound, it is impossible to imagine that there is no De Wet among the enemy. A young friend of mine, who put in for a temporary commission, was told at the War Office that he might just as well go into the Regular Army. The inward meaning of which is that K. of K. thinks it will be near six years before the last of the temporaries will be back in the bosoms of their families.

* * *

If I were to take up the White Slave business as a means of earning my daily bread, and were caught for about the twentieth time, I should like, please, to come before Mr. D'Eyncourt, the Clerkenwell magistrate—especially if I was a foreigner. Then, instead of being flogged, sentenced to two years' hard labour and ordered to be deported, I should be given some advice and two months as a vagrant. At any rate, this was the gratifying experience of one, Benno Lippschitz, a 28-years'-old German, who, deserting his English wife, beat, and lived on the earnings of, a young English girl. Why a German of military age should be at large at all, I frankly fail to see; why he should be given a nominal penalty after his first offence, I am at a loss to understand; and why a London Stipendiary—not one of the Great Unpaid and More or Less Excusably Inefficient—should encourage a loathsome form of offence, is altogether beyond me. Perhaps he feared to put a bar in the road of Kultur.

* * *

I have been shown a letter, written by an officer of the armed liner *Carmania*, whose brilliant engagement with the *Cap Trafalgar* off South America will be well remembered. The writer says: "Our A chronometer went through the fire, which destroyed our chart-room completely, and it was found afterwards among the ruins, still going, and it was reliable enough for us to obtain our positions for six days after, when we met another of H.M.'s ships." This historic chronometer, of which the cover of the box was shattered but the instrument only partially injured, is by way of becoming a cherished relic of the Cunard Company, owners of the winning vessel.

* * *

In conversation with Miss Maude Valérie White about the war, she referred in touching terms to the death by drowning, in the *Titanic* disaster, of F. D. Millet, the war-artist. "What a tragedy that both he and Bennet Burleigh should have missed the world-war," said the popular composer. "Mr. Millet spoke *eighteen* languages, and he had a house in the delightful Worcestershire village of Broadway, where I live, and also Miss Mary Anderson (Mme de Navarro)." The late Sir L. Alma-Tadema—another bright spirit, who for reasons of his nationality, etc., would have been profoundly interested in the war—often visited Mr. Millet at Broadway, where there exists quite an artistic colony.

* * *

"The curse of military life in India," said an officer of the Indian Contingent (wounded at ——, "somewhere in Northern France") "is short drinks. I give you my sacred word, my dear fellow," he added, "that for a whole hour or so before the mess-dinner you can only hear one articulate remark. It is 'Have another?'"

* * *

I venture to ask, with all humility what does all this prognostication of "four months more of war" on the part of soldiers in the ranks amount to, and ought it to be permitted? Is the humble engine-driver of a great railway company the personage best qualified to instruct us as to "the length of the run," any more than the checktaker at a West-End theatre? Can the clerk or cashier of a great company kid himself that he knows what length of credit is going to be permitted to his employers through the coming twelvemonths? Can the maid who dresses her mistress's hair for the ball be positive that her mistress will be home again by twelve midnight? I pause for a reply.

* * *

"The boy who is taken out for a stroll by his father on a Sunday afternoon is seldom the boy who gets into trouble." Well, I should smile! This pathetic pronouncement emanates from one. Judge Scully, of Chicago, where they certainly ought to know something about such things. But perhaps it's different in that delectable but detestable city of commerce and morals. We have met some of those Sunday-afternooning boys, and ——!

* * *

Talking of Chicago, the Clerk of Cook County ("which includes the city of Chicago") is publishing a list of undesirables to whom marriage licenses should be refused. He has recently "turned down" a charming couple who were both already married, and another couple of whom the prospective bridegroom was aged seventy-two and the bride *twelve*—in this latter case, because "an objection was filed by Jane's mother." The Clerk states that in one week he has received fifty objections to "puppy-love marriages." The complainants included parents, sisters, jilted lovers, and police officials armed with warrants for the arrest of one or other of the contracting parties.

* * *

Somewhere near the Fatherland there rides at anchor the "Hohenzollern," which now looks very different from the smart craft which was the envy of Cowes during regatta week. All the luxurious appointments of the one-time pleasure craft have been swept away, and the vessel is now a grim grey cruiser bristling with guns. The "Hohenzollern" was always arranged so that it could be transformed into a very fast war craft at a few hours' notice. There were all sorts of secret cupboards and hollow walls about, wherein were stored guns and ammunition. Strange to say, the most popular decorations for the walls were pictures of English warships.

THE LOITERER.

**The Reveller: "Don't be cross, dear, I've only been helping to pay for the war (hic)."**

# IN STAGELAND.

I feel I cannot let the occasion pass by without a momentary tribute to the octogenarian Mrs. Charles Calvert, *aetat* eighty since the New Year arrived. This makes her the *doyenne* of our stage by about a twelvemonth, Miss Genevieve Ward being a mere child of seventy-nine. Mrs. Calvert first appeared "on any stage" with the Keans, at the age of six. The subsequent career of this wonderful woman largely resulted from her marriage to Charles Calvert, and they fairly "made" the Prince's Theatre, at Manchester. That fine actor, Louis Calvert, has often talked to me of this, and has proudly shown me the family's wonderful collection of Shakespearean "properties."

"Mistress Wilful," the new Strand comedy-drama for Mr. and Mrs. Fred Terry, was obviously written to provide the latter with one of those hoydenish parts in which she delights, and which invariably delight us. The play, as a whole, is not particularly strong stuff. It is a Stuart drama, but this time Fred Terry does not enact the Merrie Monarch, that rôle being entrusted to C. W. Somerset—an actor too rarely seen in the West End nowadays. As one of Charles's numerous natural offspring, Meg Goodman ("Mistress Wilful"), Miss Neilson acts with her usual archness and charm. She is excellently supported by Mr. Terry as the love-lorn 'prentice, Robin Fairfellow, while we get Samuel Pepys in the flesh as portrayed by Mr. Turnbull. The piece is handsomely mounted, and ought to do very well.

I enjoyed a chat with Mr. José Levey, whose clever wife, Marga La Rubia, is playing the name-part in "A Daughter of England" at the Garrick, where the two-houses-nightly experiment is now in operation. Mr. Levey tells me that this experiment was first tried at the "legitimate" theatres with "Mr. Wu," on tour, with the happy result that that lurid drama immediately played to £800 "on the week."

Miss La Rubia is best supported by Frank Randell as the hero, and Jerrold Robertshaw as the German officer-villain. She gets her best chance in the scene wherein she effects her escape in male attire, and altogether she attains to very considerable heights. There is also a wonderful bulldog, who acts as despatch-bearer, and who immediately found favour with the audience. "A Daughter of England," which tells of Teutonic plot and counter-plot, is prettily staged, part of the setting being Alsatian.

I am pleased to note (and notify) the marked success among the New Yorkers of H. A. Jones's new drama—at least, the title sounds like drama—"A Sister's Sacrifice." When will we see it here? The veteran Henry Arthur has been, I think, represented by nothing in theatrical London in 1914 save the admirable "Silver King" revival, in which H. B. Irving starred. Mr. Jones now has two pieces running in America that haven't got here yet, the other being "The Lie."

To the Pav. Weedon Grossmith has brought that diverting sketch, "The Mystery of Redwood Grange," this being its first introduction to the West End. The character of the nervous, timid gentleman who is called upon at short notice to pass the night in a said-to-be "haunted" house fits Mr. Grossmith like the proverbial glove.

Sir G. Alexander has, as usual, got together a fine cast for his new venture, "Kings and Queens." Conspicuous is the name of Miss Alma Murray, Leigh Murray's gifted daughter, who has not been appearing in London very recently.

THE UNDERSTUDY.


PREPARE FOR THE
**Trade Boom**
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* * *

First Actor: "I played Hamlet at Sloptown once."
Second Actor: "Did it go?"
First Actor: "No; but the audience did."

* * *

### NO NERVE.

"How does Mrs. Closer stand in the smart set?"
"She lacks strategy. Twice I have arranged to have her jewels stolen and returned, but she put me off each time."

* * *

### PHILOSOPHICAL.

Salesman: "How was it you asked Grimes only £2 for that coat when the usual price is £3?"
Proprietor: "Well, you see, he had the coat charged to his account, and it is doubtful if he ever pays. Better lose £2 than £3, don't you see?"

* * *

### ALL ASLEEP.

"So you went to church last Sunday?" asked the doubtful one. "Then, to prove it, what was the text?"
"The text was, 'He giveth His beloved sleep.'"
"You're all right. How many of the congregation were there?"
"All the beloved, it seemed to me."

—*Cleveland Plain Dealer.*

* * *

### A BRIGHTENER.

"How's the baby?" asked the neighbour of the new father.
"Fine!" said the proud parent.
"Don't you find that a baby brightens up a household wonderfully?" pursued the friend.
"Yes," said the parent, with a sigh; "we have the gas going most of the night now."

—*New York Globe.*

**"What do you call your donkey—William?"**
**"How dare you insult him! He's called Nicholas."**

—*Le Rire.*


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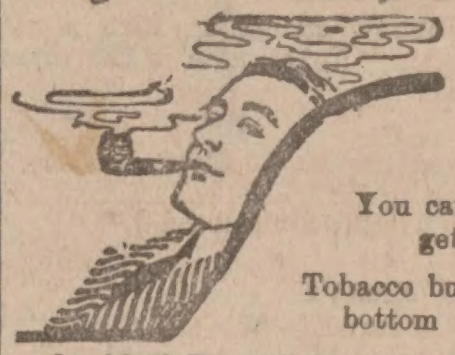

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